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**OFFICE OF
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August 26TH, 2024

Honorable Pete Buttigieg
Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave., SE
Washington, DC 20590

Secretary Buttigieg,

The Board of Ellis County Commissioners is fully supportive of the Circuit Engineering District 8 (CED 8) application for Bridge Investment Program (BIP) grant funding to replace four bridges in three rural counties in northwest Oklahoma, all located in the panhandle. This grant will improve four bridges that are currently in poor or fair condition, have insufficient widths for rural major collectors and the roads' agricultural and energy sector uses, and have elements that do not meet current design standards.

These bridges are all between 51 and 64 years old and are approaching the end of their useful lives. This package of bridges is in need of significant investment to reduce the number of bridges in poor or fair condition and that do not meet current geometric design standards for the safety, efficiency, and reliability of travel.

CED 8 has responsibility over 14 counties in one of the most rural parts of Oklahoma. With limited funding, the CED is unable to meet all the infrastructure needs within its boundaries. BIP funding would allow CED 8 to let a single contract for all four bridges included in this request and take advantage of the cost and time savings of bundling.

This project will support the critical state of good repair, safety, and mobility goals for Oklahoma's county bridge system as well as the residents and economy of the northwest region. The Board of Ellis County Commissioners strongly supports this application and requests your favorable review.

Respectfully,

The Board of Ellis County Commissioners



Blake Suthers, Chairman



Michael W. Latta



Chad Petree



Attest:



Lynn Smith, County Clerk